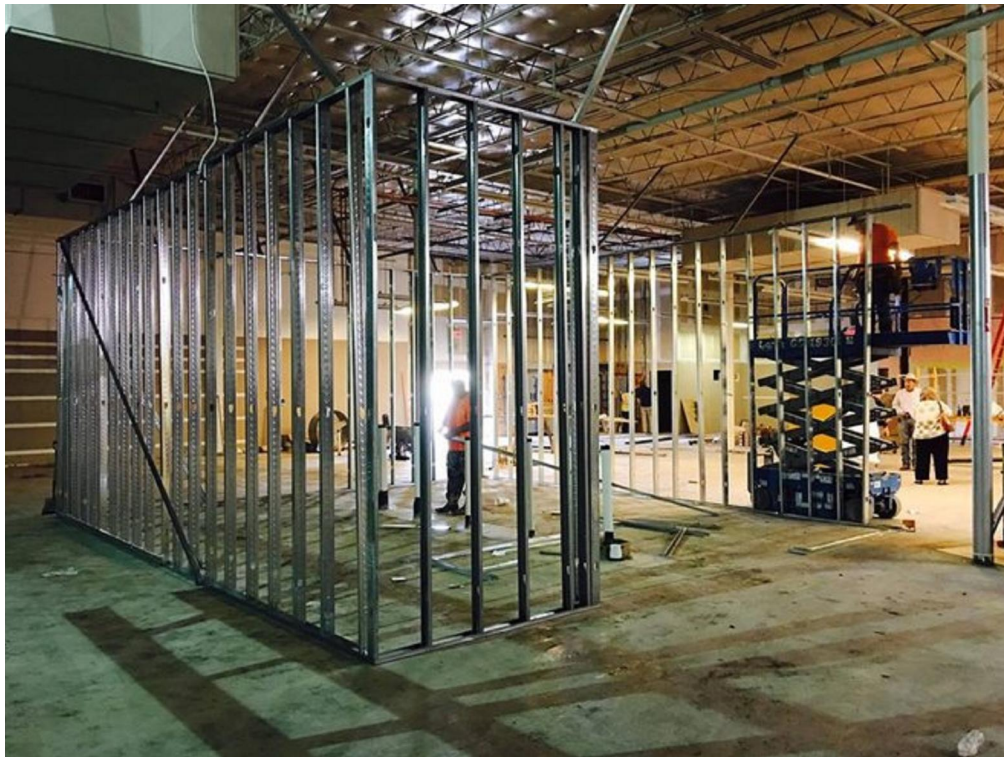


LOCAL NEWS

Studio to be built in new Abilene South Branch Library



The Abilene City Council on Thursday approved money to build a meeting room in the new South Branch Library currently being built in the Mall of Abilene. (Photo courtesy of www.abilenetx.com)

By [Brooke Crum](#) of the Abilene Reporter News

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Programming on Suddenlink Cable Channel 2 could get more interesting soon.

The Abilene City Council on Thursday approved money to build a meeting room in the new South Branch Library currently being built in the Mall of Abilene.

The library is scheduled to open in late August or early September,

said Lesli Andrews, community services director.

Andrews said the city identified the library as a potential location for a studio for Channel 2, the public, education and government channel, to diversify programming on the channel and provide an alternate meeting space for city boards and outside groups.

Council members approved spending \$120,668 in funds received from the tax charged on Suddenlink cable bills to build the room, which will be about 1,500 square feet. It will provide seating room for 80 people or standing room for 172.

The meeting room will be equipped with audio and visual equipment to record the activities in the room, as well as a green screen for projects, she said.

Just because a meeting or event is recorded in the studio does not mean it automatically will be aired on Channel 2, Andrews said.

"This would give the opportunity to really expand Abilene and what we're doing in the library system and really be innovative," she said.

The city received one bid for the proposal from Justice Construction, which is completing the library construction.

"They're already mobilized," City Manager Robert Hanna said.

"From a competitive standpoint, it would have been difficult to beat their price."

The council also amended its agreement with Friends of the Abilene Public Library so the city can fund the construction of the studio. The original agreement stated the Friends of the Library would pay for all improvements.

"A lot of the renovations are being paid for by Friends of the Library, and this funding is allowing their fundraising to go toward other improvements there," Councilman Shane Price said. "That's exciting

to be able to stretch their dollars."

The money from the cable bills may only be spent on capital improvements that benefit the public channel and that have a life of more than a year, according to city documents.

In other business, the council accepted about a half-acre from Pioneer Drive Baptist Church, at the corner of Corsicana and South Seventh streets, on which a playground will be developed. The church approached the city about the project a year ago with the requirement that the church would build the playground and the city would maintain it.

Council members also approved a drilling permit for Schkade Bros. Operating Co. to operate an oil or gas well northwest of the intersection of Vogel and Bridge avenues.

Newly re-elected Councilmen Kyle McAlister and Steve Savage took the oath of office and were sworn in for three-year terms.

About Brooke Crum

Brooke Crum is the government multi-media journalist for the Abilene Reporter-News.

[f Facebook](#) [@BrookeCrum_ARN](#) [✉ brooke.crum@reporternews.com](mailto:brooke.crum@reporternews.com)

[📞 325-676-6770](tel:325-676-6770)

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